## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1-6. (canceled)

7. (currently amended): A method for connecting a plurality of remote applications with a data source, the method comprising:

providing at least one interface module configured to interface with a at least one of the remote applications;

providing at least one port module configured to interface between the interface module and the data source;

providing a connection manager to facilitate an the interface between the interface module and the port module; and

establishing a direct connection between the interface module and the port module for communicating independently from the connection manager in subsequent communications;

further comprising returning a port module identifier for the port module to the interface module before directly connecting the interface module and the port module, if the port module is available; The method of claim 4,

wherein a plurality of port modules are provided, and returning a port module identifier for an available port further comprises:

determining which of the plurality of port modules are associated with the data source

and storing a data source identifier in a first data structure;

identifying each of the plurality of port modules by a port module identifier and storing

the port module identifier in a second data structure; and

determining the availability for each of the plurality of port modules and storing an

availability status of each of the plurality of port modules in a third data structure.


8. (previously presented): The method of claim 7, wherein each of the first, second and

third data structures are arrays.


9. (original): The method of claim 7, further comprising, storing the port module

identifier for each available port module in a queue.


10. (canceled)

11. (original): The method of claim 9, wherein the queue is a first-in-first-out array.


12. (original): The method of claim 9, wherein the port module identifier for a port

module that is no longer available is removed from the queue.


13. (previously presented): The method of claim 9, further comprising returning the first

port module identifier placed in the queue to the connection manager.

14-23. (canceled)

24. (currently amended):  A computer readable medium having stored thereon computer executable instructions for performing a method for connecting a plurality of remote applications with a data source, the method comprising:

providing at least one interface module configured to interface with a at least one of the remote applications;

providing at least one port module configured to interface between the interface module and the data source;

providing a connection manager to facilitate an the interface between the interface module and the port module; and

establishing a direct connection between the interface module and the port module for communicating independently from the connection manager in subsequent communications;

wherein the method further comprises returning a port module identifier for the port module to the interface module before directly connecting the interface module and the port module, if the port module is available;

The computer readable medium of claim 23, wherein a plurality of port modules are provided, and returning a port module identifier for an available port further comprises:

determining which of the plurality of port modules are associated with the data source and storing a data source identifier in a first data structure;

identifying each of the plurality of port modules by a port module identifier and storing

the port module identifier in a second data structure; and

determining the availability of each of the plurality of port modules and storing an

availability status for each of the plurality of port modules in a third data structure.


25. (previously presented):  The computer readable medium of claim 24, wherein each of

the first, second and third data structures are arrays.


26. (original):  The computer readable medium of claim 24, wherein the method further

comprises, storing the port module identifier for each available port module in a queue.


27. (original):  The computer readable medium of claim 26, wherein the queue is a first-

in-first-out array.


28. (original):  The computer readable medium of claim 26, wherein the port module

identifier for a port module that is no longer available is removed from the queue.


29. (previously presented):  The computer readable medium of claim 26, further

comprising returning the first port module identifier placed in the queue to the connection

manager.

30-76. (canceled)